

Minutes for the 1/27/09 meeting of the Newington Human Rights Commission:

Present: Monica Golec, Michael Munroe, Christine Andrews, Val Ginn,
Tim Manke, Scott McBride, Ken Freidenberg

Absent: Phyllis DiCara

The meeting commenced at 7:30 pm.

The first order of business was the Human Rights Commission Leadership Positions:

Ken Freidenberg announced that Chairperson Jeffrey Cultrera sent an email to HRC members stating that he was resigning from the Newington HRC due to personal and work related issues. Monica Golec stated her desire to step down from the position as Vice Chairperson of the HRC but to remain a member of the HRC. A motion was made to nominate Val Ginn for Chairperson of the HRC. Val accepted and her nomination was seconded. A motion was made to nominate Christine Andrews for Vice Chairperson of the HRC. Christine accepted and her nomination was seconded. A motion was made to retain Michael Munroe as secretary of the HRC. Michael accepted and the nomination was seconded. Ann Cameron is no longer a member of the HRC thus creating two open positions on the HRC.

The next order of business was the Storyteller Program - February 17 6:30 pm at the Library:

Ken handed out the promotional flyer that the library is using for the event. Monica stated that Mary Jo Maichack is the folk singer/minstrel who will be performing at the library. Ms. Maichack will conduct a show that is very interactive and involves singing, acting and masks. It is appropriate for ages 4 and up. The theme of the show will be about diversity. The program will be in the Community Room of the library and the Friends of the Library will supply refreshments. Tickets to the program are free but must be secured in advance due to the limited number of seats. Monica offered to contact the library to find out about setting up tables and other program day logistics. Monica will also check to see if the library is sending out the promotional flyers to the schools. Several HRC members stated that they will attend the event.

The next order of business was the Memorial Day Parade:

Ken reported that Jeffrey Cultrera has the HRC banner and the small country flags that were used in last years parade. In his resignation email, Jeffrey stated that he would return the banner and flags to Ken. The HRC discussed making this year's participation in the Memorial Day more inclusive. Val offered to contact the Special Olympics to see if they would be interested in participating. Ken offered to contact the High School's gay and lesbian liaison. Ken also agreed to contact the library to see if they could help in the recruitment of marchers for the parade. The challenges of including the mobility impaired were discussed. As a way to inform the public of the existence and function of the HRC it was agreed that it would be a good idea to hand out informational flyers during the parade. Any upcoming food drives could also be included on the flyer listing the merchants participating and the items that are needed. The throwing of any candy/food during the parade was discussed. Several committee members offered to donate any candy/food that would be needed if the need arises.

The next order of business was the Human Services Report:

Ken reported that the Human Services Department is very busy with increased demands being made on most programs. The food bank is increasing the hours that it is open to make it more convenient for working families to access this program. Ken reported that most of the town programs are likely to face budget cuts during the 2009 - 2010 fiscal year. The HRC has about 700 - 800 dollars to use before June 30 2009.

The HRC agreed that the materials for the September Waterfall festival should be purchased before June 30 2009 due to the uncertainty of future funding. It was agreed that the HRC would purchase more of the puppet kits and the informational cards at the ratio of 6 puppet kits to 4 informational cards. More of the matching games were not needed.

The following were reported under **Other Business**:

Scott McBride reported that the HRC food drive in October 2008 was a success. The business owners and their employees gave generously to the drive. Ken offered to send thank you notes to the participating businesses. Val Ginn offered to contact the same business owners to gauge their interest in participating in a HRC food drive in 2009.

The HRC decided against participating in the March 2009 Business Showcase. The HRC agreed that the booth cost of 250 dollars could be put to a more functional use. The HRC will put an informational flyer on the Town of Newington table at the Business Showcase at no cost.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

It was agreed that the next meeting of the HRC will be on **Tuesday March 24, 2009 at 7:00 pm.**

Michael Munroe - Secretary